



# Prestige Medical

## auditing your instrument sterilization procedures

### the guidelines & your responsibilities

Many National authorities publish guidelines on the correct procedures for sterilizing medical instruments. In the UK these include; The British Dental Association, Medical Devices Agency and of course, the Governments Health and Safety Executive - Local Authorities Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA)\*. The aim of these is to ensure all healthcare professionals follow a recognised set of guidelines that will ensure the risks of cross infection between patient and practitioner or vice versa, are eliminated.

*\*Many have sites, which can be found on the Internet.*

In order to comply with the guidelines, a Self Audit of your procedures, performed on a regular basis, will help ensure you maintain your responsibilities to yourself, your staff and your patients. The following procedures are based around UK recommendations, other countries may offer alternative advice but the principles will be the same.

### auditing your procedures

There are several key steps that need to be reviewed as part of your instrument sterilization audit. Following this will help ensure you are compliant with the guidelines and your procedures are safe and effective:

step 1 - autoclave/load suitability - fact sheet FS1 & 2  
Published guidelines MDA DB2002(06) specify that if you are sterilizing hollow, pouched or wrapped instruments you must use a VACUUM AUTOCLAVE.

step 2 - pre-sterilization cleaning – fact sheet FS3

step 3 - instrument loading – fact sheet FS4

step 4 - water quality – fact sheet FS7

The water used must meet the specified recommendations of your professional body & autoclave manufacturer.

step 5 - post-sterilization - fact sheet FS11

Use/Storage.

step 6 - autoclave daily testing – fact sheet FS5

The user should check the autoclave operation daily and complete the Daily Record Sheet a sample of which can be found on the reverse – Please feel free to copy it.

Vacuum autoclaves will require the daily use of a Bowie-Dick Test Pack.

step 7 - autoclave performance tests – fact sheet FS12

As a minimum, autoclaves should be tested in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations. This provides the proof that the autoclave is sterilizing effectively.

step 8 - written scheme – fact sheet FS10

Each autoclave must have a written scheme of examination (you should be able to obtain these from the manufacturer) and be examined by a competent person periodically (usually annually).

step 9 - record keeping

A file should be kept with the autoclave containing the following important information: Operating Instruction Manual; Autoclave Daily Record Sheets; Service Engineers Visit Reports; Original Certificates; Service Contract; Written Scheme; Annual Independent Inspection.

*Prestige Medicals Infection Control Fact Sheets provide the information you need to help you ensure your procedures comply with the guidelines for safe and effective instrument sterilization. Copies of these may be obtained by calling 01254 682622, on the web at [www.prestigemedical.co.uk](http://www.prestigemedical.co.uk) or emailing: [aa@prestigemedical.co.uk](mailto:aa@prestigemedical.co.uk)*

infection control fact sheet 09



Prestige Medical

# autoclave daily record sheet

Please keep these records in date order for inspection

Autoclave Type ..... Serial Number .....

Week Commencing ..... Location .....

Type of Water used .....

Daily test	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cycle Counter Number							
Time to reach holding temperature							
Temperature during holding period							
Pressure during holding period							
Total time at holding temp/pressure							
Water drained at end of day							
Printout Attached							
Initials of authorised user							
Weekly Safety Test	Yes/No	Comments					
Door seals secure							
Door safety devices functioning correctly							
Vacuum Leak Test Pass? (If Applicable)							
Air Detector Function Test Pass? (If applicable)							
Comments							
Name	Date	Signature					

infection control fact sheet